

## Abraham Lincoln papers

Abraham Lincoln, Fragment<sup>1</sup>, [September 1860]

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<sup>1</sup>This fragment is associated with Lincoln to John Hill, September, 1860. Hill had published a pamphlet in which Lincoln was accused of favoring the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, apparently without conditions, and Lincoln wrote a lengthy response which may never have been sent. John Hill was editor of the *Menard Axis* in Petersburg, Illinois, and the son of Samuel Hill, a friend of Lincoln's in New Salem. He later was an important informant for William Herndon as the latter gathered information for his biography of Lincoln. The younger Hill was a supporter of Douglas in 1858 and 1860, and the pamphlet referred to here was a reprint of a signed article in the St. Louis *Republican* of July 24, 1860.

The protest, before mentioned, placed on the Illinois Journal of the Illinois House of Representatives more than twenty three years ago; the draft of a bill, spread on the Congressional Globe more than eleven years ago; and his declaration in the Freeport debate not quite two years ago,<sup>2</sup> are all in harmony with each other, and show conclusively what Mr Lincoln's views are in regard to Slavery in the District of Columbia. They show that he thinks congress has the constitutional power to abolish it; and that the power might properly be exercised, with substantially such conditions<sup>3</sup> as set out in the bill drawn by himself; and that it ought not to be exercised without such conditions—

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<sup>2</sup> See Illinois *House Journal* (1836-1837), 817-18; *Congressional Globe*, 30th Congress, 2nd Session, XX, January 10, 1849, 212-44; *Collected Works*, III, 41-42.

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<sup>3</sup> Lincoln believed that Congress had the right to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia provided the citizens of the District be consulted, the process be gradual, and the slaveholders compensated.